

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 701

By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Jason Stinnett and Daniel Fipps on being named Firefighters of the Year by the Tennessee Fireman's Association and the Tennessee Federation of Chaplains.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens, who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, Blount County firefighter Jason Stinnett and Maryville firefighter Daniel Fipps are two such individuals; they have both been recently named Firefighters of the Year by the Tennessee Fireman's Association and the Tennessee Federation of Chaplains; and

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2009, the Blount County Fire Department responded to a call from a house on Old Niles Ferry Road; although Brian Brantley, the first Blount County firefighter on the scene, described a great deal of smoke with no readily visible flames, there was a report of one or perhaps two victims still inside the smoldering house; and

WHEREAS, given the strong working relationship between Blount County and Maryville's fire departments, it was not in the least unusual that Mr. Fipps, who was within three miles of the fire at the time, would respond himself upon hearing the call; he was especially eager to lend a hand when he learned that people may have been trapped in the house; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fipps and Mr. Stinnett donned their suits and gathered their equipment; before going into the house, they delivered a burst of water to quell any flames and then proceeded into the building with a thermal imaging camera, which would allow them to peer through the thick smoke and locate any victims; and

WHEREAS, meanwhile, Blount County firefighters Blaine Howell and Mr. Brantley brought in a hose to fight the fire in another part of the house, keeping the flames at bay while

Mr. Fipps and Mr. Stinnett searched for a man who, according to emergency dispatchers, had called 9-1-1 from somewhere in the house, perhaps the kitchen, although it was difficult for the caller to know exactly where he was for all the smoke; and

WHEREAS, while all four men were fighting the fire and looking for this man who had called from inside the home, neighbors opened a back door in an attempt to help the emergency professionals; unfortunately, the action fueled the fire with fresh air, making the situation even more dangerous and the search for victims even more desperate; and

WHEREAS, once the back door was closed, and the spreading fire had been brought under control somewhat, Mr. Fipps and Mr. Stinnett, crawling on the floor into the kitchen, were able to locate a victim, Paul Edward Ledbetter, lying on his side against a wall; the two firefighters lifted the victim, carried him to the back door of the residence, and handed him over to Blount County Sheriff's deputies, who had arrived to assist; and

WHEREAS, firefighters continued the search for a second victim because Mr. Ledbetter insisted that a woman remained somewhere in the house; fortunately, this was not the case; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the rigorous training they have received over their years of firefighting, and the spirit of teamwork they both clearly possess, Jason Stinnett and Daniel Fipps were able to save a life in the midst of terrible danger; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Stinnett and Mr. Fipps epitomize the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; for their remarkable courage, heroism, and selflessness, they should be enthusiastically commended; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Jason Stinnett and Daniel Fipps on being named Firefighters of the Year by the Tennessee Fireman's Association and the Tennessee Federation of Chaplains, thank them for their meritorious service to the people of their community and the State of Tennessee, and extend to them our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.